AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A process~~Process~~ for producing a coating said process comprising the sequential steps of :

a) cathodically electrodepositing a cathodic electrodeposition (CED) coating composition on a conductive substrate by immersing the substrate in a CED coating bath to form a CED coating film;

b) rinsing the electrodeposited coating film with (i) ultrafiltrate and subsequently with water or (ii) water, to remove excess and/or non-adhering CED coating composition;

c) contacting the CED coating film with an aqueous preparation of at least one ~~metal~~ bismuth compound; and

thermally crosslinking the CED coating film;

wherein the aqueous preparation of part (c) consists essentially of water, 50 to 100,000 ppm of bismuth compound, and optionally 5% by weight of additives, and wherein the at least one bismuth compound is a bismuth salt selected from the group consisting of nitric acid salts of bismuth, acetic acid salts of bismuth, methoxy acetic acid salts of bismuth, amino carboxylic acid salts of bismuth, hydroxy carboxylic acid salts of bismuth and sulphonic acid salts of bismuth~~wherein the at least one metal compound is a compound of a metal with an oxidation number of +2 or higher and is selected from the group consisting of compounds containing cations of the metal, compounds forming cations of the metal in aqueous medium, compounds containing cations containing the metal, compounds forming cations containing the metal in aqueous medium, compounds comprising outwardly neutral complexes of the metal, colloidal oxide of the metal and colloidal hydroxide of the metal; and wherein the metal itself is selected from the group consisting of metals having atomic numbers of 20 to 83 with the express exclusion of chromium, arsenic, cadmium, antimony, mercury, thallium and lead~~.

2. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein the aqueous preparation is an aqueous solution or an aqueous colloidal solution.

3. (Currently amended) The process of claim 1, wherein the at least one bismuth~~metal~~ compound is contained in the aqueous preparation in a total quantity of 100 to 50,000 ppm bismuth~~metal~~.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein the substrate provided with the non-cross-linked CED coating film is brought into contact with the aqueous preparation by dipping, spraying, rinsing or combinations thereof.

9. (Currently amended) The process of claim 1, wherein contact is made in such a way that 0.1 to 2 % by weight of the bismuth~~metal~~ originating from the at least one bismuth~~metal~~ compound (calculated as bismuth~~metal~~), relative to the resin solid of the CED coating film, pass from the aqueous preparation onto and/or into the non-cross-linked CED coating film.

10. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein the substrate provided with the still non-cross-linked CED coating film is connected as a cathode during contact with the aqueous preparation.

11. (Previously presented) The process of claim 1, wherein the electrically conductive substrate~~s~~ is selected from the group consisting of metallic substrates, automotive bodies and automotive body parts.

12. (Withdrawn) An electrically conductive substrate coated according to the process of any one of the preceding claims.